

Again the Gray Ghost Produces Mystery and Creates Another New and Interesting Problem.

ACROSS the breakfast table, Mrs. Jonathan Cornwallis looked furtively at her husband. The trim maid—the Cornwallises' retired and employ men-servants—had left the room, in accordance with her custom. The Cornwallises seemed to have the last few moments of the morning meal to themselves.

"I wanted," said Mrs. Cornwallis timidly, "to talk about Mary."

Her timidity was entirely assumed, as was the timeliness of her lance. It was a well established fiction between them that Jonathan was gruff and grumpy and must be approached delicately, circuitously.

"Well, now, what is it this time?" demanded the husband. "It seems to me that ever since Mary married her worthless professor I've done nothing but contribute to their support."

"Jonathan Cornwallis, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! His wife rebuked him. "You know that you're prouder of Mary for having married Tom Curtis than if she'd married the most distinguished bachelor in America."

"And what does the distinguished gentleman's wife want now?" demanded Jonathan.

"Well, the university can't send out the expedition to the south this year. Mary thought—"

"Oh she thought, did she?" Jonathan's sarcasm was unconvincing.

"And I think," went on his wife, ignoring the interruption, "that it would be a very fine thing if you presented the university with half a million in order that the expedition should not be delayed."

"Humph! Ha!" grunted Jonathan.

"It's a lot of money."

"Can't you spare it?" asked his wife.

"Permit me, madam, to finish my sentences. As I was about to say, it's a lot of money, but not enough. By tomorrow morning I expect that a certain matter, the details of which would bore you, will be settled. The first thing that I shall do will be to write a check, payable to the university, for one million dollars."

His wife rose, went around the table and kissed him. "Make it two million if you'll kiss me again like that," he said.

"You get sillier every minute," declared Mrs. Cornwallis.

"You get prettier," he countered gracefully.

"For a silly man you have amazing judgment," she told him.

"I wish you'd be more respectful, Mrs. Cornwallis," he said sternly.

"Good morning, Mr. Cornwallis; it's time you went to your office and I attended to my day's labors," said his wife.

But she accompanied him to the front door, patted him on the shoulder as she helped him into his coat, and gave him, gratis, a million-dollar kiss before he left. So that he was smiling, greatly contented with the world and his place therein, as he entered his waiting limousine.

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TODAY, although his wife did not know it—it was a surprise which he held in reserve for her—he expected to retire from the active management of his business affairs. For months he had been negotiating for the sale of his interest in the Federated Motor Patents Company. A combination of that concern with several other similar companies was almost effected. Once the final papers were signed, he would retire. It was a matter that involved payment to him of some fifteen million dollars in bonds of the new holding company, and it had taken months to get in shape. Now they were in order. He planned to take his wife aboard a certain huge yacht, and set sail for the South Seas. Dreams that devotion to business had made it impossible to realize, were coming true at last.

So he smiled, his eyes half closed; and so he was unaware of the sudden threat toward his life that the carelessness of two chauffeurs created. An opening between a taxi-cab and a truck in front of him, Cornwallis' chauffeur made for it. He blew his horn three as he did so, but instead of turning in toward the curb the driver of the truck turned outward, to the left. And the driver of the taxicab, glancing back over his shoulder, seemed to lose his head completely. He applied the brakes to his car, and it came almost to a stop. Not even the quick braking by Cornwallis' chauffeur could prevent the limousine from being jammed between the two other machines.

Even so, the slow rate of speed at which the three vehicles were moving seemed to have precluded the possibility of accident. The policeman at the next street intersection was amazed when Cornwallis' chauffeur, who had leaped from his seat and opened the door of the car, and leaned inside, emerged and wildly waved his hands.

The policeman ran to assist. He waved the taxi and truck to the curb, and, noting that, beyond a crushed fender and some scraped paint, the limousine had suffered no damage, he looked inside the body of Cornwallis' car.

"Shock, I guess," said the chauffeur. The officer looked at the financier, whose form had slumped to the floor of the car, and whose face was white. He saw that the eyes were closed.

"Better rush him home," he advised.

He returned to the chauffeur, but that person was in the middle of the street, holding both hands high in the air, stopping an approaching ambulance. A white-jacketed man swung down from the interior and ran to the limousine. He laid a finger on the wrist of the unconscious financier; his face grew grave; he leaned farther inside, loosened Cornwallis' collar, and placed his ear over the victim's heart.

"Lucky I came along when I did," he said. He spoke to the chauffeur. "Help me carry him into the ambulance. I'll rush him to the hospital."

"Serious?" asked the policeman.

The ambulance physician shrugged.

"He's an elderly man, and you never can tell what shock will do."

The officer produced a notebook.

"Who is he?"

"Jonathan Cornwallis," replied the chauffeur.

The policeman whistled. "Well, it wasn't anybody's fault, really, but I think I'll have to arrest all three of you."

The ambulance was driven away, bearing the still unconscious financier, and the early afternoon newspapers proclaimed to an interested public that Jonathan Cornwallis lay in the private

hospital of Dr. Morgan Leclerc, and that his condition was serious.

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THE stock market responds instantly to certain news. The exchange closed in the middle of a furious bear drive upon Federated Motors stock. When the trading hours came to an account of the bulls, who, in view of the prospective amalgamation had been active with the stock, they had suffered a loss of five points. In a thirty-million-dollar corporation this amounted to a million and a half. For all the world knew that, in the event of Cornwallis' death, the proposed amalgamation would be indefinitely postponed, and his stock would not be worth nearly so much as its recent quotations.

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highly. But I will say that if they hadn't had excellent counsel they'd have been suspended last winter."

"Who are their clients in this attack on Federated Motors?" asked Pelham.

Young Devine laughed grimly. "If we could answer that, don't you think we'd have been to see them?"

"Why, we'd have arranged some sort of compromise," ejaculated the elder lawyer.

Young Devine vented some of the anger within him. "You'd think that Simmons & Leidy knew the exact moment when old Cornwallis was going to have his accident. They'd been selling quietly from the moment the exchange opened, and the minute that news of the mishap reached the exchange their floormen began unload-

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